LEXINGTON CONSERVATORY THEATRE, 1977

produced by League of Theatre Artists, Inc.

A FUNDING APPEAL

LEXINGTON CONSERVATORY THEATRE is a resident professional summer theatre, based in the town of Lexington, Greene County, New York. Its goal is to bring quality dramatic entertainment to the Catskill area, at prices which make these presentations available to virtually anyone, and without falling into the fluff-syndrome endemic to most summer-stock operations. Furthermore, LCT presents an ideal situation for out-of-town tryouts by the League of Theatre Artists, presenting both new plays and new approaches to the classics, with an eye to possible production in New York City.

LEXINGTON is located in the Catskills, 2½ hours north of New York City, not far from the Hunter Mountain ski area: a locale that has long been a favorite with vacationers, both summer and winter. LCT is located on the premises of the Lexington for the Performing Arts complex, a former summer camp which boasts two fully-equipped theatres, the 199-seat Barn Theatre and the 100-seat River Theatre. LCT is in residence from June through August, presenting between 5 and 8 full productions, and a host of new, experimental, and in-progress works.

LEAGUE OF THEATRE ARTISTS, INC. is a not-for-profit corporation based in New York City. The League was originally a co-operative amalgam of all kinds of theatre artists, and has since evolved into an organization dedicated to producing an ever widening range of theatrical projects. In the League's two-year existence, LEXINGTON CONSERVATORY THEATRE has been its major undertaking.

LEAGUE OF THEATRE ARTISTS was incorporated on 5/19/76, under Section 201 of the New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation Law, to operate in conjunction with Art Awareness, Inc. and Lexington For the Performing Arts.

THE PROBLEM: GROWING PAINS

The reason for this appeal is that our projected budget for Lexington Conservatory Theatre 1977 shows a shortfall of $22,735, in an overall budget of $50,035. In other words, we have a projected earned income of $27,300, the remainder of which must be made up through gifts, grants and donations.

In large part, the increase in the 1977 budget reflects a commitment to professionalism in performance; we had the option of holding our budget down by resisting unionization among the performance personnel, but we felt that this option would hold us to a far lower plateau of artistic excellence than the other, more expensive option. Therefore, we are making a great leap forward, and we are looking for the money to accomplish this growth.

We have reasonable expectations of grants totalling $17,535, but such grants are notoriously chancy, and very slow a-coming.

We are also seeking to attract capital funding, monies over and above those needed to meet our operating expenses.

THE PROSPECTS:

While there is no question that New York City is the center of the theatrical universe, the City is finding increasing difficulty in generating its own life's blood: new, quality theatre. The goal of the League of Theatre Artists is to be an enabling force, and Lexington is an ideal location, where a relatively large number of productions can be mounted for intelligent audiences, where the tremendous performance pool of the City is readily accessible, and where the attention of discerning producers can be easily attracted.

The League of Theatre Artists and the Lexington Conservatory Theatre have already garnered unanimously enthusiastic critical notices, both in New York City and in the Mountaintop area. Once we get over the fiduciary hump, we anticipate a sterling future.

THE SEASON

In 1976 LCT presented 7 plays, including an original musical for young pelple.

LCT 1976:

OUR TOWN by Thornton Wilder

CHARLEY'S AUNT by Brandon Thomas

SCRAWDYKE by David Halliwell

WINNERS by Brian Friel*

COMIN' THROUGH THE RYE by William Saroyan*

THE LOVER by Harold Pinter*

THE ENCHANTED by Jean Giraudoux

FRANKENSTEIN by Oakley Hall III #

for young people: PORTABLE ANNABELLE by Edward Wolf #

In 1976, the plays were presented for one week each (a grueling schedule!), with three productions repeated for one week each, making a ten-week schedule. In 1977, projected audience growth has led us to alter our schedule so that our Main Season now comprises 5 plays, running two weeks each:

LCT 1977:

THE TAVERN by George M. Cohan

PICNIC by William Inge

'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE by John Ford

THE PREVALENCE OF MRS. SEAL by Otis Bigelow #

QUALITY STREET by J.M. Barrie

* One-act plays presented as a single bill.

New plays by new playwrights.

EXTRA ADDED ATTRACTIONS

In 1976 there were given, in addition to the Main Season, rehearsed readings of three new plays. This was the first step toward what has now become the PROVOS, a serious program dedicated to developing new playwrights by giving them access to actors, directors, and physical plant; and dedicated too, to developing alternative kinds of theatre and experimentation. One side-effect of the new Mail Season organization of 5 plays X 2 weeks is that the new schedule allows for increased activity in this vital area.

Therefore, in addition to its regularly scheduled Main Season, LCT '77 offers the following:

PROVOS: the provos operate within a looser structure than the main season, but projects scheduled at this date include: UBU-REX and UBU ENCHAINED, by Alfred Jarry -- seminal absurdist works in new translations; TONS TOO/OUT OF HAND -- radical puppet opera by Axel Gros and Richard Zobel.

New Play Series: MARY V. BY Sands Hall; THE GIRLS OF SLENDER MEANS, by Gretchen Van Ryper; BEATRICE (CENCI) AND THE OLD MAN, by Oakley Hall III; LAZARUS' CUE by Maraquita Platov.

CONCERT SERIES: chamber concerts out of doors, and electronic music concerts by COMPLEX and others.

CABARET SERIES: musicales and comedy sketches by members of the LCT resident company, and guest artists including the New Liberty Vaudeville Company.

SUBSCRIPTION SERIES: reduced rates on Main Season productions, two free tickets to PROVOS projects, LCT Newsletter.

STUDENT & SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT PLANS/GROUP RATES

SPECIAL PERFORMANCES FOR THE HANDICAPPED

VISITING ARTISTS PROGRAM

APPRENTICES: selected young people over the age of 18 who will participate in classes and hands-on production work.

PUPPETRY WORKSHOPS AND PERFORMANCES: by and for young people. Directed by Brigid Brine.

LCT MANAGEMENT

Executive Director .....Michael C. Van Landingham

Artistic Director.....Oakley Hall III

Executive Producer.....Thomas F. Culp

Mr. Van Landingham holds an MFA and BA from the University of California at Irvine, where he was a Leon Goodman Fellow and Artistic Director of the Drama Workshop. He was also Artistic Director of the Cerritos College Summer Musical Program at Cerritos College, Norwalk, California, where he taught design, production and performance at all levels. In addition to his work in academe, Mr. Van Landingham has directed at Actors Studio West/Merle Oberon Playhouse, a travelling repertory troupe in the South Seas, Far and Middle East and Africa, and, most recently, for the Artists' Theatre in New York City. As Executive Director, the buck stops with him.

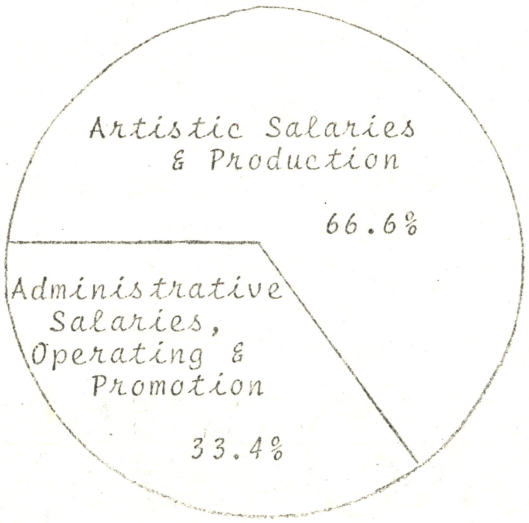
Mr. Hall received an M.A. in Creative Writing from Boston University, BA in Theatre from the University of California at Irvine. As a playwright, Mr. Hall has had work commissioned by the Open Space, London. He has directed in New York City and in Summer Stock. He tries to keep the artistic juices flowing.

Mr. Culp is Treasurer of The League of Theatre Artists, in addition to working as a spot buyer for Ted Bates New York Advertising. Mr. Culp has also produced several segments of "The Artist in New York" on Manhattan Cable Television. In addition to public relations, advertising and promotion, Mr. Culp has considerable theatre background as director and producer. Mr. Culp oversees business and financial elements of the operation

A Board of Directors is still in the evolutionary process.

FINANCES

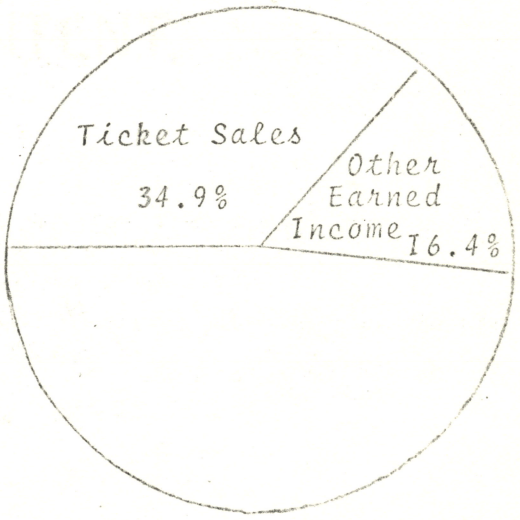
LCT 1977 projects expenditures of $50,035 distributed as follows:



This graph demonstrates our priorities: almost exactly 2/3 of our budget is involved in the actual production of plays.

This is a priority we intend to maintain.

Our projected income for 1977 breaks down as follows:



We have several unsecured commitments of funds, which, coupled with the strong probability of at least something from the New York State Council on the Arts, would allow us to operate at a deficit with a reasonable expectation of staying afloat through fiscal '77.

This is not the way we choose to operate. Our goals are:

I. To raise as much as possible of the unearned portion of our budget without gambling on State monies (thereby allowing those monies, which always come late anyway, to move us into the future), and ...

II. to seek out individuals or firms willing to participate and assist in capital fund raising.